

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A commodity sales system that is connected with a user computer in a communicable manner and is used when a user purchases  
5 a commodity, said commodity sales system comprising:

a commodity price specification module that receives a purchase request of a selected commodity from the user computer and specifies a commodity price of the selected commodity;

10 a quote determination module that receives a trade-in request of a used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and determines a trade-in quote of the used article, based on the received quotation requirement information;

15 a deduction setting module that sets a deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according to the trade-in quote of the used article thus determined;

20 a difference calculation module that subtracts the setting of the deduction from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity to calculate a difference; and

an amount payable notification module that notifies the user computer of the calculated difference as an amount payable.

2. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1, wherein said deduction setting module sets the deduction to be not less than a preset support price.

5           3. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1, wherein said quote determination module, in response to receipt of the trade-in quote of the used article and the quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, specifies a tentative quote of the used article  
10 based on the quotation requirement information, compares the specified tentative quote with a predetermined reference value, and determines either a price having a value range or a price having no value range as the trade-in quote of the used article according to a result of the comparison, and

15           said deduction setting module sets the deduction of the selected commodity corresponding to a minimum value in the value range of the price when the price having the value range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article, while setting the deduction of the selected commodity corresponding  
20 to the price having no value range when the price having no value range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article.

4. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3,

wherein the predetermined reference value is used to determine whether an assessment of the used article is required to settle a final trade-in price of the used article.

5           5. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3,  
wherein said deduction setting module sets the deduction of the  
selected commodity corresponding to the minimum value in the  
value range of the price, and when a final trade-in price settled  
after an assessment of the used article exceeds the minimum value,  
10 said amount payable notification module notifies the user  
computer of a refund corresponding to a difference between the  
final trade-in price and the minimum value, together with the  
amount payable.

15           6. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 3,  
wherein said quote determination module, in the case where the  
price having no value range is determined as the trade-in quote  
of the used article, based on the result of the comparison between  
the tentative quote and the predetermined reference value,  
20 determines either a settled price having no value range, which  
depends upon the tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the  
used article or a preset fixed price, which does not depend upon  
the tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article

according to a value level of the tentative quote.

7. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,  
wherein said deduction setting module, in the case where said  
5 quote determination module determines trade-in quotes of  
multiple used articles, sets a total deduction of the selected  
commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity  
price of the selected commodity, according to a sum of the trade-in  
quotes of the multiple used articles or a sum of deductions set  
10 for the respective used articles.

8. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 1,  
said commodity sales system further comprising:

an adjustment module that adjusts the difference  
15 calculated by said difference calculation module to be not less  
than a predetermined value.

9. A commodity sales system in accordance with claim 8,  
wherein said adjustment module comprises a transmission  
20 sub-module that is activated to send the user computer a message  
showing that the trade-in request of the used article is not  
acceptable, instead of said amount payable notification module.

10. A commodity sales method that is carried out when a user purchases a selected commodity, said commodity sales method comprising the steps of:

(a) causing a server computer to receive a purchase request  
5 of a selected commodity from the user computer and specify a commodity price of the selected commodity;

(b) causing the server computer to receive a trade-in request of a used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the  
10 user computer and determine a trade-in quote of the used article, based on the received quotation requirement information;

(c) causing the server computer to set a deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according to the  
15 trade-in quote of the used article thus determined;

(d) causing the server computer to subtract the setting of the deduction from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity to calculate a difference; and

(e) causing the server computer to notify the user computer  
20 of the calculated difference as an amount payable.

11. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10, wherein said step (c) sets the deduction to be not less than a

preset support price.

12. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10,  
wherein said step (b), in response to receipt of the trade-in  
5 quote of the used article and the quotation requirement  
information, which is required for quotation of the used article,  
specifies a tentative quote of the used article based on the  
quotation requirement information, compares the specified  
tentative quote with a predetermined reference value, and  
10 determines either a price having a value range or a price having  
no value range as the trade-in quote of the used article according  
to a result of the comparison, and

said step (c) sets the deduction of the selected commodity  
corresponding to a minimum value in the value range of the price  
15 when the price having the value range is determined as the trade-in  
quote of the used article, while setting the deduction of the  
selected commodity corresponding to the price having no value  
range when the price having no value range is determined as the  
trade-in quote of the used article.

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13. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,  
wherein the predetermined reference value is used to determine  
whether an assessment of the used article is required to settle

a final trade-in price of the used article.

14. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,  
wherein said step (c) sets the deduction of the selected commodity  
5 corresponding to the minimum value in the value range of the price,  
and when a final trade-in price settled after an assessment of  
the used article exceeds the minimum value, said step (e) notifies  
the user computer of a refund corresponding to a difference  
between the final trade-in price and the minimum value, together  
10 with the amount payable.

15. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 12,  
wherein said step (b), in the case where the price having no value  
range is determined as the trade-in quote of the used article,  
15 based on the result of the comparison between the tentative quote  
and the predetermined reference value, determines either a  
settled price having no value range, which depends upon the  
tentative quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article or  
a preset fixed price, which does not depend upon the tentative  
20 quote, as the trade-in quote of the used article according to  
a value level of the tentative quote.

16. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10,

wherein said step (c), in the case where said step (b) determines trade-in quotes of multiple used articles, sets a total deduction of the selected commodity, which is to be subtracted from the specified commodity price of the selected commodity, according  
5 to a sum of the trade-in quotes of the multiple used articles or a sum of deductions set for the respective used articles.

17. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 10,  
wherein said step (d) adjusts the calculated difference to be  
10 not less than a predetermined value.

18. A commodity sales method in accordance with claim 17,  
wherein said step (d) adjusts the calculated difference to be  
not less than the predetermined value and sends the user computer  
15 a message showing that the trade-in request of the used article is not acceptable, instead of execution of said step (e).

19. A used article quotation system that provides a user  
computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a  
20 user, said used article quotation system comprising:

a quotation requirement information acquisition module  
that, in response to receipt of a request for quotation of the  
user computer itself, which has been sent from the user computer,



causes the user computer to automatically read out quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the user computer, and acquires the quotation requirement information from the user computer;

5           a quote determination module that determines a quote of the user computer, based on the acquired quotation requirement information; and

          a quotation information transmission module that sends quotation information, which includes the quote of the user  
10 computer determined by said quote determination module, to the user computer.

20. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 19, wherein said quotation requirement information  
15 acquisition module acquires information regarding each component of the user computer as the quotation requirement information.

21. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 20, wherein the information regarding each component of  
20 the user computer includes at least a class of a CPU, a capacity of a memory, and a capacity of a hard disk.

22. A used article quotation system in accordance with

claim 20, said used article quotation system further comprising:

a component price storage module that stores a mapping of a component price to each component of the user computer,

wherein said quote determination module reads the  
5 component price of each component of the user computer from said  
component price storage module, based on the information  
regarding each component of the user computer acquired by said  
quotation requirement information acquisition module, and  
determines the quote of the user computer according to a sum of  
10 the component prices.

23. A used article quotation system in accordance with  
claim 19, wherein said quotation requirement information  
acquisition module, in response to receipt of the request for  
15 quotation of the user computer itself, which has been sent from  
the user computer, sends back a program, which causes the user  
computer to read out the quotation requirement information, to  
the user computer and subsequently acquires the quotation  
requirement information from the user computer.

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24. A used article quotation system in accordance with  
claim 23, wherein said program utilizes either of a file for  
recording information regarding each component of the user

computer as the quotation requirement information or a control program for controlling each component of the user computer and thereby causes the user computer to read out the information regarding each component of the user computer.

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25. A used article quotation system in accordance with claim 19, wherein said quote determination module determines a trade-in quote when the acceptance of the user computer is a trade-in with purchase of a commodity and a cash-out quote when  
10 the acceptance of the user computer is a cash-out without purchase of any commodity, based on the quotation requirement information acquired by said quotation requirement information acquisition module.

15 26. A used article quotation method that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation method comprising:

(a) causing a server computer, in response to receipt of a request for quotation of the user computer itself, which has  
20 been sent from the user computer, to acquire the quotation requirement information which is required for quotation of the user computer, from the user computer;

(b) causing the server computer to determine a quote of

the user computer, based on the acquired quotation requirement information; and

(c) causing the server computer to send quotation information, which includes the quote of the user computer.

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27. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires information regarding each component of the user computer as the quotation requirement information.

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28. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 27, wherein the information regarding each component of the user computer includes at least a class of a CPU, a capacity of a memory, and a capacity of a hard disk.

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29. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 27, wherein said step (b) reads a component price of each component of the user computer from a component price storage module, which stores a mapping of a component price to each component of the user computer, based on the information regarding each component of the user computer acquired in said step (a), and determines the quote of the user computer according to a sum of the component prices.

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30. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 26, wherein said step (a), in response to receipt of the request for quotation of the user computer itself, which has been sent from the user computer, sends back a program, which causes  
5 the user computer to read out the quotation requirement information, to the user computer and subsequently acquires the quotation requirement information from the user computer.

31. A used article quotation method in accordance with  
10 claim 30, wherein said program utilizes either of a file for recording information regarding each component of the user computer as the quotation requirement information or a control program for controlling each component of the user computer and thereby causes the user computer to read out the information  
15 regarding each component of the user computer.

32. A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 26, wherein said step (b) determines a trade-in quote when the acceptance of the user computer is a trade-in with purchase  
20 of a commodity and a cash-out quote when the acceptance of the user computer is a cash-out without purchase of any commodity, based on the quotation requirement information acquired by said step (a).